



March 29, 2012

*Testimony in Opposition to  
SB 456 An Act Concerning Harassment, Electronic Harassment  
and Cyberstalking*

Senator Coleman, Representative Coleman and Members of the Judiciary Committee - my name is Chris VanDeHoef and I'm the Executive Director of the Connecticut Newspaper Association (CDNA).

I'm testifying in **OPPOSITION** to SB 456 *AAC Harassment, Electronic Harassment and Cyberstalking*. CDNA supports the intent of the bill, cyber bullying and electronic harassment are serious issues affecting thousands of people - namely high school and college students - around the world daily.

CDNA has concerns specifically with Section 2. CDNA is concerned that the language "intent to harass, annoy or alarm another person" in line 21 is too vague and undefined. If a news reporter were to post a story that is factual, but potentially embarrassing to another person, they might be in violation of this section if the embarrassed person can prove there was an "intent to harass or annoy". While proving this about a news reporter is most likely very difficult, it exposes newspapers, reporters and the news gathering industry to a potentially unmanageable amount of legal exposure for simply reporting the news.

Again, CDNA supports the intent of this bill and is interested in working with the Committee to achieve the goal of stopping cyber bullying while maintaining the press' ever important mission of reporting the news.

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